(iv) Recovery of compensation amount ordered by the redressal agency through certificate case as arrears of land revenue;

(v) Provision for issue of interim orders by the redressal agencies;

(vi) Establishment of consumer protection council at district level.

(c) to (e) One of the proposals contained in the Amendment Bill as introduced in the Rajya Sabha was that the opposite party would be entitled to engage a legal practitioner only if the complainant engaged a legal practitioner or was himself a legal practitioner or had not objection to the opposite party engaging a legal practitioner.

Representations were received from sections of lawyers against such a provision in the Bill which was omitted through official amendment at the stage of consideration in the Rajya Sabha.

Purchasing power of poorest among poor

†2691. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there are a number of such persons among very poor people who are not even able to purchase subsidised foodgrains; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) As per a National Sample Survey about 5% of the total population in the country sleep without two square meals a day. In order to make the Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) more focused and targeted towards this

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

category of population, the Prime Minister announced the "Antyodaya Anna Yojana" on 25th December, 2000. The Scheme envisages identification of one crore poorest of the poor families from amongst the estimated number of BPL families and providing them with subsidized foodgrains at the rate of Rs. 2 a kg for wheat and Rs. 3 a kg for rice. The entitlement of foodgrains for Antyodaya families has been further increased to 35 kg from 25 kg per family per month for a period of one year *i.e.* 31.3.2003.

Failure of PDS

2692. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Distribution System conceived during perpetual food deficiencies period has now lost its relevance;

(b) if so, whether Government are thinking of any other such mechanism where economically weaker consumers are not adversely affected farmers interests are not jeopardized and the element of subsidies is considerable reduced; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir. The Public Distribution System (PDS) network has served the country well and is an important instrument of the Government to enhance food security, specially for people below the poverty line.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Do not arise.